

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, and 7-12 remain in the application and claims 1, 3, and 7 have been amended hereby. Claims 2, 4-6, 13, and 14 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claim 1 has been amended in part to correct the misspelling "sel-like" to --seal-like--, as requested in the Office Action at paragraph 1.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the rejection of claims 1-5, 8-10, and 12-14 under 35 USC 102(e), as being anticipated by Shindo, and of the rejection of claim 11 under 35 USC 103(a), as being unpatentable over Shindo in view of Martschitsch.

Applicants note the Examiner's finding of Allowable Subject Matter in claims 6 and 7.

Therefore, claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 6 and the limitations of intervening claim 5, 4, and 2, and claim 7 has been amended to be placed in independent form and to include all the limitations of claims 1, 2, 4, and 5.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that amended independent claims 1 and 7, and the claims depending therefrom, are in condition of allowance.

An early issuance of a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

COOPER & DUNHAM

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jay M. Maioli", is written over the printed name.

Jay M. Maioli
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JHM/PCF:tb